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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: DISTRUST BETWEEN BASRAH GOVERNOR AND IRAQI ARMY

CLASSIFIED BY: Ramon Negron, Director, Regional Embassy Office
Basrah, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (g)

¶1. (C). Summary: Basrah governor Mohammad Wa'ili and General Abd al-Aziz al-Dalmi of the Iraqi Army (IA) reported an August 16 altercation between the governor's personal security detail (PSD) and members of the 14th Division, IA. While there are conflicting versions of the events that transpired, joint UK/REO efforts seem to have averted a public dispute, which would have spread the perception of distrust between the Governor and the military. End summary.

¶2. (C). Governor Wa'ili told the REO that around 10:00 am on August 16, he was informed by his own intelligence sources of a roadside IED while returning from Basrah International Airport, which caused him to take an alternate route. Wa'ili claimed that the IA had known about the IED, yet did not warn him.

¶3. (C) When Wa'ili's motorcade arrived at an IA checkpoint, his personal security detail (PSD) began to question the officer in charge, 2LT Majed. An altercation ensued between the IA soldiers present and Wa'ili's PSD. After he arrived at his office, Wa'ili learned that troops of the 14th division IA had surrounded the governorate building, from approximately 11:00 am - 1:00 pm.

¶4. (C) Aziz said members of Wa'ili's PSD attacked 2LT Majed, and that a federal court issued an arrest warrant against the security detail for abusing the officer. Aziz also alleged that Wa'ili retained a citizen illegally, which amounts to kidnapping.

¶5. (C) Wa'ili had intended to hold a press conference to denounce the IA action and call for the removal of Gen. Abd al-Aziz. However, British Consul General Nigel Haywood told REO that he persuaded Wa'ili to take the issue through proper legal channels, explaining that going public may backfire since he does not have legal authority over the IA. Subsequent to that conversation, the governor asked a judge to issue an arrest warrant for 2LT Majed.

¶6. (C) Comment: Governor Wa'ili told UK FCO that he cannot move about safely because of his distrust of the 14th Division. Despite the fact that Wa'ili and Aziz obviously do not get along, they both realize that it is in Basrah's best interest to avert the spread of a more damaging perception - that the governor does not trust the military that surrounds him and vice versa. To complement UK efforts with Governor Wa'ili, REO Director scheduled a meeting with Aziz for August 18, where we will encourage him to work through his differences with the governor. We will follow up SEPTTEL with any significant developments. End Comment.

NEGRON